

July 10, 2007

The Honorable James H. Webb, Jr.
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Webb,

On behalf of the 368,000 members of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), I am writing to express MOAA's support for your amendment that would support our military men and women by establishing standards for dwell time between consecutive operational deployments.

Even before September 11, 2001, our military leaders indicated that members and families of all services were stretched thin in meeting deployments requirements. The subsequent exponential growth of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, compounded by reluctance to grow our forces to meet requirements of an acknowledged "long war," has placed extreme stress on active duty, Guard and Reserve forces alike.

MOAA is very concerned that steps must be taken to protect our most precious military asset – the all-volunteer force – from having to bear such a disproportionate share of national wartime sacrifice. If we are not better stewards of our troops and their families in the future than we have been in the recent past, MOAA believes strongly that we will be putting the all-volunteer force at unacceptable risk.

Your amendment makes provision for exceptions in national emergencies, recognizing that national safety must come first. But it establishes an important principle that a primary requirement for sustaining long-term readiness is a national commitment to sustaining military forces at levels sufficient to provide a reasonable rotation base that avoids imposing unacceptable burdens of national sacrifice on too small a force.

MOAA applauds your efforts to focus national attention on this fundamental principle of fairness to the members and families of the military community who already have stretched themselves beyond any reasonable standard in protecting our Nation's interests.

Sincerely,

